



JOHN NORLING

John C. Norling is a Director in Fennemore's **Business & Finance** practice group, where he provides strategic, comprehensive counsel to businesses, business owners, and individuals. With more than thirty years of experience, John assists clients with all facets of their operations — from day-to-day business matters to long-term organizational planning. His practice encompasses corporate transactions, real estate, business entity structuring, mergers and acquisitions, and compliance with federal, state, and administrative requirements. He is also well-versed in contract negotiation and drafting, in a wide variety of areas including advertising and regulatory compliance, mergers & acquisitions, real estate transactions, commercial loan transactions, and other commercial matters.

A recognized authority in the automotive dealership sector, John represents dealers nationally. His automotive practice includes guiding clients through dealership acquisitions and sales, dealership start-ups or “add-points,” manufacturer and finance relationships, ownership succession, operational compliance, consumer matters, and regulatory issues relating to advertising, privacy, and consumer protection. He serves as outside general counsel to multiple dealer associations, including the Arizona Automobile Dealers' Association, Valley Chevrolet Dealers Advertising Association, Valley Honda Dealers Marketing Association, Tucson Chevy Dealers Local Marketing Association, and several other industry-related associations. As general counsel, he advises on state and federal regulatory schemes such as the Red Flags Rule, the Safeguards Rule, Privacy Rule, and franchise statutes.

In addition to his work in the automotive sector, John serves as outside general counsel to entrepreneurial and family-owned businesses in diverse industries. His guidance focuses on preventative legal counseling and includes contract negotiation, business structuring, shareholder/member relations, asset and real estate acquisition and disposition, risk management, and long-range succession planning. John is known for taking a proactive approach to legal counseling, helping clients avoid disputes through strong documentation and thoughtful risk mitigation.

EDUCATION

- J.D., The Ohio State University
 - Ohio State Journal Dispute Resolution
- B.A., Wichita State University, *cum laude*

- Athletics Director Honor Roll
- Scholarship Athlete, Football

AREAS OF PRACTICE

OTHER EXPERIENCE

- Automobile Dealerships
- Business & Finance
- Real Estate
- General Counsel Services
- Mergers & Acquisitions

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

Lead counsel in transactions involving the sale or acquisition of automobile dealerships, powersports dealerships, and related real estate, ranging from \$1 million to close to \$200 million in several states, including Arizona, California, Nevada, Colorado, Texas, Georgia, and North Carolina.

Former branch counsel for one of the country's largest captive automobile finance

- companies, handling the documentation of lending relationships and enforcing loan documents.

Advises automobile dealers with consumer issues relating to after-market and after-sales services and disputes.

- Review and drafts legislation designed to protect the interests of franchised new motor vehicle dealers throughout the State of Arizona.

Serves as outside general counsel to businesses in a wide range of industries, assisting in all aspects of their operations.

Advises new motor vehicle dealers on compliance matters, including Federal and State

- regulatory matters involving advertising, the Red Flags Rule, the Safeguards Rule, the Privacy Rule, and other Federal and State regulatory promulgations.

Served as outside general counsel to one of the largest family-owned landscaping material production and sales companies in the Western United States, advising on matters ranging from the negotiation and preparation of vendor contracts to the acquisition and divestiture of real estate and culminating in the sale of the multi-state operation to a private equity group.

Serves as a trusted advisor to businesses and takes the time to learn and understand clients' businesses to better advise them with regard to their particular situations.

AWARDS AND HONORS

- AV Preeminent Peer Review Rating, *Martindale-Hubbell Best Lawyers in America®*, Business Organizations (including LLCs and Partnerships), 2025-2026;
- Closely Held Companies and Family Businesses Law, 2021-2026; Commercial Finance Law, 2024-2026; Corporate Law, 2019-2026; Real Estate Law, 2014-2026
- *Best Lawyers in America®*, Phoenix Lawyer of the Year, Real Estate Law, 2019
- *Phoenix Business Journal*, Most Admired Leaders, 2020

- *Arizona Business Leaders Magazine*, AzBusiness Leaders, Management, 2020
- *Arizona's Finest Lawyers*, Corporate and Real Estate Law, 2009-2012
- *Arizona's Top Rated Lawyers*, Corporate and Real Estate Law, 2012

ARTICLES AND PRESENTATIONS

- Author, "[Legal-Ease: Your Lawyer as Your Business Consultant](#)," Greater Phoenix InBusiness Magazine, June 1, 2024
- Featured, "[John C. Norling: The True Measure of Success](#)," Attorney at Law Magazine, January 26, 2021
- Featured, "[Phoenix law firm gives ASU Law grads meaningful opportunities to work where they studied](#)," Arizona State University, July 27, 2020
- Featured, "[The College Athletes of Jennings, Strouss & Salmon: Playing the Game of Law](#)," Attorney at Law Magazine, June 26, 2020
- Quoted, "Arizona Legal Services Institution is Proud to Continue Support of ASU Law," Arizona State University Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law, 2019
- Interview, "[4 Ps of Brand Endorsements to Make the FTC Happy](#)," AdWeek, June 22, 2015
- Featured, "[What new online advertising rules mean for Phoenix small businesses](#)," Phoenix Business Journal, June 18, 2015
- Author, "[Is Your Ad Legal? Digital Advertising Raises Additional Issues for Marketers](#)," AdWeek, January 21, 2015
- *Six Legal and Regulatory Risks CMOs Can't Afford To Ignore*, Contributor, CMO.com, 2015
- *Navigating the Advertising Minefield: Businesses Must Be Diligent When Formulating Advertising Campaigns*, Co-author, Client Alert, 2015
- *Updated FTC Guidelines on Internet Advertising & Marketing*, Interview, Arizona Horizon, 2015

PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

- Member, Board of Visitors, James E. Rogers College of Law, University of Arizona
- Member, National Association of Dealer Counsel
- Former Board Member, Herberger Theater Center
- Former Board of Trustees, Arizona Center of Nature and Conservation/Phoenix Zoo
- Former Board Member, Sandra Day O'Connor Institute for American Democracy
- Former Member, State Bar of Arizona, Rules of Professional Conduct Committee
- Former Member, Association for Attorneys and Executives in Corporate Real Estate
- Former Member, Scottsdale Airpark Committee
- Former Member, Economic Development Advisory Council

ADMISSIONS

- Arizona
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit
- U.S. Tax Court